

The Maryland Yellowthroat

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2015



VOL. 35, NO 5

President's Corner by Tom Strikwerda

Feeding Birds Again

I used to feed birds every winter but stopped some years ago due to the presence of very unwelcome pests of the rodent variety – no, not squirrels. Then, last winter my eyes fell on my old birdfeeder in the garage cupboard, and I decided to give it another try. It took some time for the birds to rediscover this newly available food source, possibly because it was already mid-winter, but, after a few adventurous birds discovered it and called in reinforcements, I was surprised and found it challenging keeping up with the demand – the frequent trips to the local store and morning ritual of filling feeders before leaving for the office. Perhaps my memory of how it used to be is flawed, but the number of birds devouring my offerings seems to have increased from prior years. I've just started feeding again after a summer hiatus and it took less than a day for the arrival of the first visitor, a Chickadee. Meanwhile, I submitted a large (for me) order for seed as part of my MOS chapter's fundraising project. If present trends continue, my order won't be enough. And cross your fingers that those pests don't return!

My renewed hobby and the pace of seed consumption got me thinking about the scale of bird feeding. How many people feed birds and what the latest information was about this activity? Turns out somewhere in the neighborhood of 60 million people in the US actively feed birds and spend \$2.5 billion every year doing so. And the birdseed crop is a significant part of the agricultural business. Almost a quarter of the black oil sunflower seed crop in the US enters the birdseed supply chain, for example. Marketing of seed has grown too, with suppliers trying to outdo one another with specialty mixes and premium (and, yes, organic) varieties. Large suppliers have established trade associations and spun off side organizations that study bird's seed and feeder preferences and to provide the information to consumers.

And feeding birds is international and increasing. Growth worldwide is around 4 percent per year and particularly rapid in the Pacific-rim countries. The

United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) published a guide in 2005 describing the different seed types, and where they might grow best. The target audience was primarily small farmers and business entrepreneurs in developing countries looking for a good cash crop as a way to enter into the birdseed business. I like the idea that feeding birds here may be benefitting farmers in far off countries.

All of this growth and interest is great news, of course, especially for the birds. Although I haven't seen a study demonstrating that feeding birds leads to more avid birders, I'm certain that having more people taking an interest in and observing wildlife can help raise awareness of their beauty and diversity. Casual feeders may begin to look for more unusual avian species further afield and become nascent environmentalists as well as active birders. Whether this will lead to an increase in their stewardship of nature and habitat remains to be seen. To the extent possible, by feeding birds MOS members can be examples for others, especially the next generation. I'm sure the majority of you already do. For me, I know I'm looking forward to having some fun again watching the activity here at home. And I hope you'll enjoy all the activity during the winter months as well.



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YMOS News Fall 2015: Maryland Birds and Habitat Summer Program 2016

MOS in conjunction with Washington College will once again offer the Maryland Birds and Habitats workshop this summer. The residential program will be offered from June 26 – July 1, 2016 at Washington College. In addition to a wide variety of field activities, the group will learn how to use technology to locate bird observations and to report data on eBird. As in past years the program will be offered concurrently for both educators and students incoming into grades 7 - 12.

The program is open to participants of all ability levels. Beginners will receive instruction on both visual and auditory identification. Participants will learn to bird by habitat and will use atlas strategies and technology to document bird breeding. All will also learn how to use eBird to record, store, and access data. The instructors will be Dr. Wayne Bell and George Radcliffe, YMOS Coordinator.

Application information and program details are available on the YMOS Webpage at ymos.org. Some scholarships are available for both students and educators. Deadline for application is March 31, 2016. Applications can also be obtained from George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com. MOS members should get this information into the hands of any potentially interested students or educators as soon as possible.

George Radcliffe
YMOS Coordinator



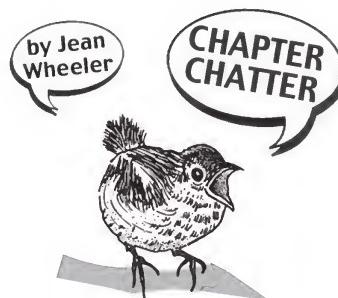
Maryland needs YOU to help run the 2016 elections!

Birders make the best polling place workers for a lot of reasons:

- * We're smart and honest.
- * We have an excellent eye for detail.
- * We're willing to get up early for a good cause!

The 2016 election dates in Maryland are April 26 and November 8. Contact your local Board of Elections (http://www.elections.state.md.us/about/county_boards.html) to learn more about serving as an Election Judge. The job comes with a small stipend, you'll be doing a great service for your community, and the experience is a lot of fun!

Janet Millenson
Montgomery County



ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Danube Delta

The delta of the Danube River in northeastern Romania is one of the best bird-watching areas in Europe. *Marilyn Taylor, Lloyd Lewis, Joy Chambers and Pete Bungay* of the Anne Arundel chapter joined with Nicol Mutch and a team of six additional Scots lead by Russell Nisbet to search the Delta by both land and water over the course of eight days at the end of August. The water exploration was conducted for four days on a craft the locals call a Floating Hotel with cabin, dining and observation decks and a crew that included cooks, a steward and boatmen manning the tugboat that propelled the Hotel. The boatmen served also as drivers for three powerboats on excursions into the extensive network of water trails branching off the main channels of the river. The base for the Hotel is the port city of Tulcea, which is about 60 miles upriver from the Black Sea.



Floating Hotel and Tugboat, photo by Peter Bungay

The lodging on land was at the Grindul Lupilor Pension in the small town of Sinoe. A superb birder from Transylvania, Imre Simo, served as the guide, spotter and problem-solver for the whole trip. Besides the river and marsh habitats accessed by boat, his varied itinerary included agricultural fields, lakes and the Black Sea coast, as well as visit to the Histria Fortress, the site of a city established by Greek colonists in the 7th century BC and continuously occupied through the Roman period until the 7th century AD. The total species count of over 160 included the following family group totals: 4 grebe, 2 pelican, 13 Heron types, 11 Duck, 17 Raptor, 26 Wading, 8 Gull, 7 Tern, 3 Owl, 5 Woodpecker, 3 Lark, 2 Wagtail, 2 Wheatear, 3 Warbler, 3 Flycatcher, 5 Tit, 2 Shrike and 5 Crow types. Among the treats for Anne Arundelers were seeing numerous Hoopoe, Common Kingfishers, European Bee-eaters, European Rollers and Golden Orioles. The Scots seemed particularly pleased as well at the sightings of Black Woodpeckers, Black Kites, a Pomarine Skua (Jaeger), a couple of Saker Falcons, a Terek Sandpiper and flights of Purple Herons. A special treat for Imre was spotting a Cattle Egret for the first time in the Delta. All were delighted by a foray on the small boats into the shallow Lake Fortuna to be surrounded by thousands of birds, in particular rafts of hundreds of feeding White Pelicans. A highlight at the Grindul Lupilor was the close-up view of a Long-eared Owl roosting in the hotel yard.

--Peter Bungay



Photo of Long-eared Owl, photo by Peter Bungay

CECIL COUNTY

Pat Valdata spent two weeks in Belgium at the beginning of September, based in Olsene, a small town in East Flanders. Thanks in part to tips from Jean Hugé of Birding Pals, she added four birds to her life list: Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*), Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*), Long-tailed Tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*), and Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*). Most of the birds were seen along the Leie Canal near Olsene; at De Gavers, a lake in Harelbeke; and at the Bourgoyen-Ossemeersen Nature Preserve in Ghent.

Belgian birders were excited to have a breeding pair of Bee-eaters for the first time in many years. They were listed on a rarities website similar to eBird: <http://waarnemingen.be>. Although the Bee-eaters were in Harelbeke, Pat didn't get the chance to look for them. She also dipped on a Ferruginous Duck and Common Pochard. Travel binoculars just don't have the power needed for scoping ducks! Still, even though she wasn't in Belgium primarily for birding, Pat managed to see 39 species while enjoying the frites, waffles, chocolate, and beer for which Belgium is justifiably renowned. --*Pat Valdata*

As some musical group once said, "It was twenty years ago today....." Cecil bird club members *Kimberleigh* and *Ken Drier* were trying to decide between spending time in the Canadian Rockies, since Kim is originally from Canada, or the national parks in the Southwest. Ken decided to review some past birding data. It was determined that it had been twenty years since they had ventured to Bryce Canyon, Zion and the Grand Canyon National Parks. The trip by coincidence would also coincide with their twentieth anniversary. That settled that question. They would be flying in and out of Vegas and renting a car. First stop was Bryce Canyon with its magnificent amphitheater of hoodoos and carved rocks. Kim marveled at the blue color of the Steller's Jay while Ken watched Black-billed Magpies fly around the hotel. Flocks of Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen in the local field with the cattle. Black-headed Grosbeak was spotted on the wires while Lesser Goldfinch were busy in the roadside flowers. First lifer for the trip was the Brewer's Sparrow at the hotel. They were able to watch both the full moon come up over the canyon and the next night witnessed a rain shower that produced a double rainbow, two special evenings. Next up, moving much farther north, Moab with both Arches and Canyonlands National Parks within striking distance. Cool birds like both the Pinyon Jay and Titmouse were observed on the trails at Arches. Another life sparrow, the Black-throated Sparrow was spied in the sage brush. Other good birds were the Western Tanager and Loggerhead Shrike. The north

rim of the Grand Canyon was the next area to visit. They stayed in a cabin at the Kaibab Lodge which is about 15 miles from the rim of the canyon on the Kaibab Plateau. The cabin looked out across a meadow of wildflowers where Mule Deer could be seen during the day and the Milky Way from horizon to horizon at night. Two more life birds put in appearances. This time warblers. Ken was able to find both Virginia and Townsend's in the pines along the canyon's rim. Swainson's Hawks flew over the canyon while an improbable White-faced Ibis was found in a small mud pond. Kim and Ken spent their anniversary in Zion National Park. This was just a week before disaster struck the park and several hikers were swept away and killed during a flash flood. As they entered the park from the east entrance a large family group of Desert Big-horned Sheep was climbing about on the cliffs right next to the road. They created quite a traffic jam. This also allowed Ken the opportunity to score another life bird, the small Bushtit. The couple splurged when getting back to Las Vegas and booked a room at the Egyptian themed Luxor Hotel for all of \$37. The trip total species count was a rather low 77 yet both agreed it was a perfect way to celebrate their twentieth anniversary. --Ken Drier

HARFORD COUNTY

Pinekney Island National Wildlife Refuge, near Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, is 4,053 acres of coastal islands, land and water, 67% of which is salt marsh and tidal creek. My husband and I visited Pinekney Island on the morning of June 3rd, 2015. It was a sunny and hot day and, although the island has 14 miles of trails, we hiked only to Ibis Pond, a little over a mile from the parking area.

It was stunning, the height of nesting season. Adults and young of Reddish, Snowy, Great and Cattle Egret; Tricolored, Little Blue, Great Blue, Green, Black-crowned Night, and Yellow-crowned Night Heron; Glossy and White Ibis, Wood Duck and Common Moorhen all congregated at the pond. The noise was unbelievable. The bribe and bonus for my husband (not a birder) was the group of alligators sunning on the banks. By the time we returned to the car, Boat-tailed Grackles, Summer Tanagers, Painted Buntings and Wood Storks had become common sightings. If you are ever in the area, do not miss this great refuge, open 7 days a week, daylight hours only.

--Karen Kennedy

Four Harford County birders, *Amanda Koss, Joe Subolefsky, and Dennis and Jean Kirkwood*, traveled to South Africa in late July. The trip covered the Limpopo province, Kruger and Pilansberg National Parks, and the Capetown Region. Joe and Jean

photographed everything in sight and the birding was very special. In addition, we totaled 42 species of mammals including an encounter between spotted hyenas and African wild dogs. Our bird list totaled 300 and we tallied almost half of the endemics for South Africa. One special highlight was a pelagic trip out of Simonstown off the Cape of Good Hope. Unlike our trips out of the East Coast, birds were seen throughout the entire trip by the thousands, especially in the vicinity of fishing trawlers. Add in breaching humpback whales, Cape fur seals, and a shark or two and it can easily be described as the ultimate pelagic. --Dennis Kirkwood

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Don Messersmith writes that he had a busy summer traveling within the United States on various relatively short trips. "A reunion with my four daughters in Amarillo, Texas, was highlighted by American Avocets in a public park as tame as Mallards are here. Black Guillemots and Roseate Terns off the coast of New Hampshire followed by Gray Jays in Northern Vermont were good finds in New England. San Diego and later Sausalito, California, produced Heerman's Gulls, Elegant Terns, Black Oystercatchers, Black Turnstones and more while visiting family and friends. Driving alone 30 miles into the Mojave Desert in August, not surprisingly, produced only one Lesser Goldfinch and one Rock Wren. Ravens in Southwest Virginia and Brown-headed Nuthatches at my daughter's feeder in North Carolina rounded out my travels to 24 states with not many birds, but some we don't have here. My most interesting activity in September was serving on the committee of five people, which included the Editor of the National Geographic Field Guide, Curator of the Postal Museum, IBA Director from National Audubon Society and Director of Assoc. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies to select the 2016 Federal Duck Stamp. From a total of 157 mostly excellent entries we selected two Trumpeter Swans in Flight for next year's stamp. These stamps provide funds for our National Wildlife Refuges and will serve as the Entrance Fee to Refuges."

Tom Marko, our expat member who has resided in Germany for the past 3 years, writes that he will accompany his wife to her new position in Vicenza, Italy on October 5th. Tom departs Germany with a species list of 181 birds and looks forward to building a new list in Italy. He's concerned, though, whether he will be identifying birds by sound or by gesticulations in that country.

Scott Young writes that his job at NIH necessitates a bit of foreign travel to various meetings. "Recently, I

was fortunate to visit both Sicily and the South Island of New Zealand (it was winter there). Birding is a hit or miss proposition on these trips, however. Nonetheless, I saw 20 species in Sicily (mostly Taormina) and 32 in New Zealand (mostly Queenstown). Interestingly, in New Zealand, 7 of those 32 I had seen previously in either Maryland (e.g., Common Redpoll!) or Europe as they had been introduced from Europe. Of course, a number were quite colorful. In New Zealand I especially liked the world's only subtropical parrot, the Kea, and the Tui (wild vocalizations), and in Sicily the European Goldfinch."

Like Scott, your correspondent has also found it's possible to slip in a little foreign birding while on another mission, in this case a family vacation. Sitting in a hotel lawn chair gazing out at Italy's Chianti countryside this May, he noticed a Eurasian Hoopoe in the grass. Walking around the grounds he couldn't resist starting an Italy eBird list that eventually came to 27 species. "The really cool thing was, although I had no idea what these birds were (a red-faced goldfinch?), I had my iPhone. I got a list of likely birds from eBird and their pictures from BirdsEye and could work out what they were. Of course they were just garden birds, but *Italian* garden birds." --Chris Wright



The Status of the Hoodwink, *Dissimularix spuriosa*: An Ornithological Curiosity

No state checklist should be without an account of the Hoodwink, *Dissimularix spuriosa* Peterson, 1968. As this species does not appear, nor is ever likely to appear in any Maryland publication, it is appended here for completeness. Few studies in ornithology even mention this much-discussed bird, notable exceptions being *Ornithological Biography*, Audubon, 1838 (p. 144) and *Birds of Maryland and The District of Columbia*, Stewart and Robbins, 1958 (p. 388).

Not surprisingly, the breeding status of the Hoodwink in the region is unclear. Nonetheless, working on the principle that the more common it is the less will be known about it (i.e., inversely proportional to its abundance), it must indeed have a high density. What is unchallenged, judging by the number of records of other species rejected by the MD/DC Records Committee of the MOS, is that the Hoodwink is a

regular vagrant showing a definite early October maximum.

The earliest historical record of *D. spuriosa* is John Smith's *Chesapeake Meanderings: a Note on Hidden Fauna*, 1609 (p. 76-78) and quoted in Merrett's *Pinex Rerum Naturalium Britannicarum*, 1666, p. 182, where he describes the species on the Chesapeake Bay as an "inelegant example of a waterbird, and perilously close to a reptile".

But we must leave it to the peripatetic Mark Catesby in his *Jottings from an Active Life* (1750) to confirm the identity of the species:

"...it lives partly in the water and partly out with one foot like a goose's foot, the other like a turkey; it lays its eggs near the surf in calm weather when the bird sits brooding on the charmed wave and though they wet their breasts, they lay their tails on dry land."

Colin Rees,
Anne Arundel



Maryland/DC Records Committee Status Report as of September 25, 2015

by Phil Davis, MD/DCRC Secretary

The Maryland/DC Records Committee (MD/DCRC) has reached the following record decisions since the last committee status report was published in *The Maryland Yellowthroat*. This report covers MD/DCRC review package 160. MD/DCRC report numbers are in brackets. These records will be addressed in additional detail in a future issue of *Maryland Birdlife*. No new "state" species were included in these decisions; therefore, the "official" species totals for Maryland and the District of Columbia remain at 448 and 334, respectively.

More information on the MD/DCRC can be found on the committee's web pages at the following URL:
<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/rindex.html>

MD Records Accepted:

- Wood Stork, *Mycteria americana* [MD/2014-092]
Cromwell Valley Park, Towson, Baltimore County.
12-Oct-2014. One bird, possibly immature.
- Corn Crake, *Crex crex* [MD/1999-088]
Stockton, Worcester County.
28-Nov-1900. One bird.
- Black-legged Kittiwake, *Rissa tridactyla* [MD/2014-099]
Patuxent River Park, Croom, Anne Arundel County.
07-Nov-2014. One first-cycle bird.
- Black-legged Kittiwake, *Rissa tridactyla* [MD/2014-106]
Sandy Point State Park, Annapolis, Anne Arundel County.
24-Nov-2014 through 01-Dec-2014. One immature.
- Franklin's Gull, *Leucophaeus pipixcan* [MD/2014-033]
Violettes Lock, Seneca, Montgomery County.
06-May-2014. One bird.
- Franklin's Gull, *Leucophaeus pipixcan* [MD/2014-105]
Chestertown Wastewater Treatment Plant, Chestertown, Kent County.
19-Nov-2014 through 05-Jan-2015. One first-cycle.
- Common Ground-Dove, *Columbina passerina* [MD/2015-001]
Masonville Marine Terminal, Curtis Bay, Baltimore County.
30-Dec-2014 through 02-Jan-2015. One bird.
- Vermilion Flycatcher, *Pyrocephalus rubinus* [MD/2014-115]
Hickory Point, Pocomoke City, Worcester County.
27-Dec-2014. One immature/female.
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, *Tyrannus forficatus* [MD/2014-022]
Fort Smallwood Park, Pasadena, Anne Arundel County.
12-Apr-2014 through 13-Apr-2014. One bird.
- Chestnut-collared Longspur, *Calcarius ornatus* [MD/2015-006]
Smithsburg, Washington County.
31-Jan-2015 through 02-Feb-2015. One bird.
- Le Conte's Sparrow, *Ammodramus leconteii* [MD/2014-085]

Hydes Road Park, Carroll Manor, Baltimore County.

03-Oct-2014 through 05-Oct-2014. One bird.

Le Conte's Sparrow, *Ammodramus leconteii* [MD/2014-094]

Hart-Miller Island, Millers Island, Baltimore County.

13-Oct-2014 through 27-Oct-2014. One bird.

Le Conte's Sparrow, *Ammodramus leconteii* [MD/2014-102]

E.A. Vaughn WMA, Girdletree, Worcester County.

15-Nov-2014. One bird.

MD Records Not Accepted:

Swallow-tailed Kite, *Elanoides forficatus* [MD/2014-066]

Blackwater NWR, Cambridge, Dorchester County.

10-Sep-1980. One bird.

Corn Crake, *Crex crex* [MD/2012-024]

Otwell Road, Oxford, Talbot County.

21-Apr-2012. One bird.

Sabine's Gull, *Xema sabini* [MD/2014-087]

Sandy Point State Park, Annapolis, Anne Arundel County.

04-Oct-2014. One immature.



Birds of Note – by Les Roslund

The top attraction in September for the birding community was the presence of two BROWN BOOBIES in Baltimore Harbor. Their discovery was widely posted on Sep 18 by Gary Hawkins of Arlington, VA, who circulated an Audubon Naturalist Society report from Deborah Rowan of Baltimore. Deborah is one of the Baltimore Harbor water taxi drivers. She first saw these birds the morning of Sep 16, noted that they were highly unusual and that they seemed to be staying around, and provided a detailed description of what they looked like, where they were and where folks might go in order to see and photograph them. With great joy the birding community picked up this information and ran with it. Over the next few days literally hundreds of people, birders and non-birders alike, shared the fun of seeing

BROWN BOOBIES in Baltimore, far away from their normal range. The birds were still present as of Sep 25.



Photo of Brown Boobies visiting Baltimore Harbor,
photo by Evelyn Ralston

Current consensus is that those two were an adult female and a juvenile. Most of the time they remained perched on large ropes that were present between two very large cargo ships, the S.S.DENEBOLA and the S.S. ANTARES. These were tied at the Locust Point dock and had been there for quite a long period of time. Best viewing of the BOOBIES was from small boats, but on clear days many of the field marks could be seen through telescopes suitably placed on shore.

A "heads-up" alert back on Sep 5 had come from Nico Sarbanes of Baltimore who reported a brief view of a large dark bird while he was walking with family around Fort McHenry NM. Immediate attempts to relocate that bird were not successful, but it is quite likely that Nico had attained the first Baltimore sighting of a BROWN BOOBY. At present the only accepted record for BROWN BOOBY in MD is of one bird seen and reported from Assateague Island National Seashore on Aug 3, 2009.

Prior to the Booby Bonanza, Maryland birders were enjoying the normal visitors of late summer. For a fair period of time the TRICOLORED HERONS caught lots of attention at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center, Queen Anne's County. The first report came from Mark Schilling of Queen Anne's County who found three of them on July 3. For the next six weeks as many as seven TRICOLOREDS were seen nearly every day. The last report was of a single bird, seen by Dave Palmer of Talbot County on Aug 16. Most of these birds were juveniles foraging on or beside Lake Knapp in the company of many GREAT and/or SNOWY EGRETS and LITTLE BLUE HERONS.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITES always provide a happy surprise when they appear in Maryland. This season there have been two sightings, both on Aug 2, but at widely separate locations. A morning viewing was a treat for Ellen Lawler near the Oak Hill apartments in Salisbury, Wicomico County. Ryan Johnson of Salisbury later found what was probably the same bird perched in a spruce tree not far from the original site. The second SWALLOW-TAILED KITE that day was reported by Mark Rositol of Fort Washington who saw a single bird near the train tracks at Weverton, Washington County. There were no reports of later sightings of this bird.

On Aug 22 in the afternoon a fine group of warblers entertained and challenged birders in Cromwell Valley Park, Baltimore County. This birding group found what was first reported as a BREWSTER'S WARBLER but which, after further review, turned out to be a LAWRENCE'S WARBLER. This warbler was initially seen by Tim Carney and others and was later relocated by Tim Houghton of Glen Arm, Baltimore County. The Tim Houghton review concluded LAWRENCE'S WARBLER, a backcross adult female. It was a very fulfilling birding day in Cromwell Valley Park, with thirteen other warbler species reported, along with both cuckoos, both orioles and several empids.

Late August usually signals the start of the southward parade of migrating COMMON Nighthawks. The flocks reported this year were right on time. The first big group was of about 30 birds passing right over Rick Sussman's yard in Woodbine, Carroll County, on Aug 27. Rick had been watching for them, but this group provided a surprise by coming in from the south and heading north. On Aug 28 the lucky homeowner was Dave Gersten of Silver Spring, Montgomery County. Dave was treated to a spectacular flight of Nighthawks flying over Layhill Park and through his neighborhood north west of Layhill Road. The birds kept swirling and crossing paths, making a precise count difficult to attain, but Dave's estimate was that over 60 birds were present. The next night, Aug 29, the heaviest action was reported by Don Simonson of Darnestown, Montgomery County. Don carefully counted two groups of 17 and 27 Nighthawks passing over the town for a fine evening total of 44.

Late August migration attracted many highly skilled birders to Worcester County to check the action over there. Three such birders, Bill Hubick, John Hubbell and Mike Ostrowski, paid careful attention to Skimmer Island in Ocean City on Aug 29 and were rewarded with sightings of a GULL-BILLED TERN,

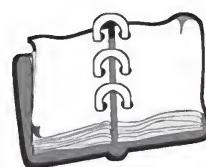
three MARBLED GODWITS and three SANDWICH TERNS. Also on the island, loafing on the sand were 35 BLACK SKIMMERS. This flock included many juveniles and was a refreshing sight since this species is one for which nesting success is marginal at best.

Through the entire month of August selected cells of Poplar Island in Talbot County hosted large numbers of AMERICAN AVOCETS. Back on Aug 6 the bird census performed by Tim Carney for Maryland Environmental Services found a total of 165 AVOCETS on the island. Over a month later, on Sep 9, the MES Birding Trip to Poplar Island again turned up 165 AVOCETS according to the careful count maintained by Joe Hanfman of Howard County on behalf of the 20 birders that shared the trip. Between those dates, other visits consistently revealed over 140 AVOCETS on the island. Whether in numbers large or small, these birds through their beauty and grace provide great joy for the birders that manage to see them.

As usual, various sites in Worcester County provided great views of wading birds. One highly successful morning of wader observation was attained by Marcia Balestri of Worcester County on Assateague Island on Sep 11. Her report for the morning was highlighted by a flock of 138 WHITE IBIS, a very impressive number indeed! Others on her morning list included GREAT EGRETS (23), SNOWY EGRETS (26), CATTLE EGRETS (10), LITTLE BLUE HERONS (20), TRICOLORED HERONS (7), GLOSSY IBIS (2) and GREAT BLUE HERON (1).

Most years Maryland visits by EARED GREBES are limited to sites near the ocean but this fall that pattern has already been broken. To date, EARED GREBES have been reported from three different counties. The first sighting was by Bill Hubick and Stan Arnold on Aug 15 as they pursued a weekend survey of Swan Creek in northern Anne Arundel County. The grebe was quite distant but Bill bravely ventured the call. Subsequently, others relocated the bird and supported EARED GREBE as the correct identification. The second EARED GREBE of the season was found on Hart-Miller Island and reported by Kevin Graff. Kevin was reporting for a group of six observers who made the grueling Hart-Miller Island trek on Aug 31. Later visits to Hart-Miller on Sep 11 and Sep 14 relocated this bird. The third sighting was of three EARED GREBES on the waters of the Hurlock Waste Water Treatment Plant in Hurlock, Dorchester County. Levin Willey of Linkwood discovered them on or about Sep 11 and Rick Palmer attained photos of them on Sep 13. After that the word about their presence spread rapidly, and many birders converged

on the Hurlock WWTP over the next few days to see the grebes and get photographs. The most recent and perhaps final report was provided by Art Drauglis of Washington, DC. On Sep 21 Art successfully relocated the grebes and also had the bonus of some fine close-up views of a WILSON'S PHALAROPE during his visit.



MOS Calendar NOV – Dec 2015 By Marilyn Veen

MOS Chapter Web Sites (to be consulted for the most up-to-date trip/meeting info – see back page)

Sunday, November 1

(Note: Eastern Standard Time begins)

■ **Anne Arundel.** Kinder Farm Park Family & Beginner Bird Walk. We will be mostly off trail on grassy paths and will visit several bluebird boxes to check for progress. Walks are fair weather only. 8 AM. Half day. Meet at the first parking lot on the left after passing the unmanned entry gate, 1001 Kinder Farm Park Rd. Trip lasts 2 to 3 hours; however, attendees are free to leave at any time. Contact Stacy Epperson, 410-987-7533 or stac.epperson@gmail.com.

■ **Frederick.** Local hawk watch. Date/location dependent on weather. Reservations required. Leader: Tom Humphrey, 301-696-8540.

■ **Howard.** Centennial Park. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. 8 AM. 2-3 hours. West end parking lot. Leaders: Karen and Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731 or KJHeff@aol.com.

■ **Talbot.** Ackridge Properties along Oxford Rd and Town of Oxford waterfront, if time permits. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM. Leaders: Paul & Priscilla Thut, 410-745-6657.

Tuesday, November 3

MEETING. **Baltimore.** "Rachel Carson and Her Sisters: Extraordinary Women Who Have Shaped America's Environment", with *Robert K. Musil, PhD*, adjunct professor at American University. 7 PM. Greenhouse Classroom, Cylburn Arboretum, Baltimore.

Wednesday, November 4

■ Baltimore. First Wednesday Walk at Fort McHenry. Continuing a series of morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Telescopes useful. Canceled in inclement weather. 8 AM - noon. Park outside the main entrance gate, in lot on left, and meet at the gate. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "Osprey" by *Greg Kearns*. Meetings begin at 7 PM at the Carroll Nonprofit Center, 255 Clifton Blvd, Westminster with a brief period for socializing, followed by the guest lecturer. Afterward, there will be a short business meeting. Contact Don Jewell at jewelldg@gmail.com.

MEETING. Cecil. Speaker TBD. 7 PM at Elkton High School, Room B120, 110 James St, Elkton.

■ Washington. Enjoy hawk watching at Washington Monument SP. Trip is co-sponsored with the Potomac Valley Audubon Society. Meet Sandy Sagalkin in the upper parking lot. 9:30 AM -noon. Registration is strongly encouraged. Contact Sandy, monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

Thursday, November 5

MEETING. **Frederick.** *Mike Welch* will tell us about birding the Central California Coast. 7 PM at the Frederick High School Heritage Room.

■ Patuxent. Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon. Luther Goldman Trail and along Indian Creek. 3 PM. Meet at parking lot at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich, mozurk@bellAtlantic.net, for more info.

Friday, November 6

DINNER/BUSINESS MEETING. **Harford.** "Galapagos Islands: Enjoying the Evolutionary Diversity with

National Geographic." An island-hopping view of the unique animals, plants and places as seen through the camera lens of President *Bob Werrlein*, and a National Geographic video of the trip's day-to-day outings. 6:15 PM at Churchville Presbyterian Church. Reservations are necessary. For more information, contact johen24@gmail.com

Saturday, November 7

■ Cecil. Waggoner's Gap Hawk Watch. Located near Carlisle, Pennsylvania, on the ridges favored by migrating hawks, this site is known for an excellent place to see Golden Eagles in November. Pack a lunch and dress warmly—it can be very windy and cold up there. Also, be aware that this is a steep, rocky outcrop, so strong shoes or hiking boots are helpful, as is a seat cushion. Meet at the North East Food Lion parking lot on Route 40 at 6 AM for an all-day trip. No trip leader.

■ Eastern Neck NWR. Guided Winterfowl Walk. Conditions permitting, hundreds, if not thousands, of Canada Geese, Tundra Swans, Scaup, Ruddy Ducks, Buffleheads, Mallards, Black Ducks, Canvasbacks, Mergansers, and others can be spotted. Bald Eagles are often observed at Eastern Neck, as well as other local wildlife. The walks will include Hail Creek, Shipyard Creek, Cedar Point, and Panhandle Point, all sanctuary areas ordinarily off-limits to the public. Spotting scopes will be available. Bring a camera. A local birding expert will accompany each walk. Event will cover approximately two miles and last about two hours, with cocoa and cookies served at the Refuge headquarters afterward. Wear boots and dress warmly! No rain dates. Registration is limited to 20. Free, but donations to Friends of Eastern Neck appreciated. 8 AM. For more information and for reservations, contact: Gren Whitman, easternneckwalks@gmail.com or 443-691-9370

■ Howard. Howard Conservancy at Mt Pleasant Farm Sky Watch. This trip will be strictly a sky watch for late-migrating raptors and other potential goodies. Our main target will be Golden Eagle; while not expected, early November is the best time to catch one flying over Howard County. Last year a half-day sky watch less than a mile from this location produced an immature Golden Eagle and a Sandhill Crane, along with good numbers of Bald Eagles and Red-tailed Hawks, plus Northern Harriers, accipiters, and some

waterfowl. We will watch the skies and tally the birds as long as conditions are productive. Hope for a north wind! Bring water, lunch, hat, sunscreen, light-colored sun glasses, comfortable lawn chair (recliners are best), binocular, scope, and camera if you like. Participants can also walk the Conservancy trails if sky-watching proves non-productive. Facilities available. 9:30 AM. Half day. Meet at parking lot. Leader: Russ Ruffing, ruff2@verizon.net.

■ Montgomery. Oaks Landfill. Explore this now-closed landfill adjacent to the Blue Mash Nature Trail. Mostly open terrain on a gravel road, including two pond views and one hill climb of moderate difficulty. Possible sparrows, raptors, and waterfowl. Leaders will have a scope for distant birds. We have special permission to enter this "closed to the public" landfill so reservations are essential. Limit 16. Meet at 8 AM. Contact one of the leaders for reservations and more info. Co-leaders: Mark England 240-207-3132 (h) or 240-375-4500 (c) and Ed Patten, 301-948-5648.

■ Patuxent. Walk at the Fran Uhler Natural Area jointly with PG Audubon. 7:30 AM. Meet at the end of Lemon's Br Rd, off Rte 197 just north of Bowie State College. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton, kiwisuits@msn.com, for more info.

■ Washington. Birding and breakfast at the County Agricultural Center off Sharpsburg Pike. 7:30 AM. Leader: George Warrick, 301-799-9059.

■ Washington. Observe Saw-whet Owl banding by Steve Huy at Lamb's Knoll. Wear sturdy shoes, bring a flashlight, and be prepared to stay as late as midnight. Children are welcome. Meet at 9:15 PM at the Boonsboro P&R. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 to register.

■ YMOS. Chincoteague NWR. This is a great opportunity to get a good look at a lot of bird species. Waterfowl will be back, and Chincoteague provides a unique opportunity to explore many types of habitats. Target species are herons, waterfowl, skimmers, raptors and thrushes. 5 AM to 8 PM. Lodging will be provided Fri and/or Sat night for students coming from a distance. Email George Radcliffe, radclifg@gmail.com, of your intent to go at least 2 weeks in advance of the trip.

Saturday - Sunday, November 7 - 8

MOS. Work Weekend at Irish Grove. Join others for a work weekend to help maintain the house and grounds of this Somerset County Sanctuary. Great birding opportunities as well. Stay overnight for free. Contact Dotty Mumford, dottymum@comcast.net or 410-849-8336, for more details and to RSVP.

Sunday, November 8

■ Anne Arundel. Cabin Branch Restoration Area. David Gillum will lead this easy access monthly walk that begins in the Annapolis Bowl parking lot, which is around the corner from Annapolis Mall. The Severn Riverkeeper Program has worked to turn around a degraded section of property into a lovely habitat for birding throughout the year and could be very good for migrant birds. 8 AM - 11 AM. Meet at Annapolis Bowl, 2057 Generals Hwy. Contact David Gillum, 410-266-8775 or dagmapper@verizon.net.

■ Baltimore. Swan Harbor Farm Park. Half-day trip to Harford County hotspot for sparrows, waterfowl, raptors, Horned Larks and other birds of this transitional season. Meet 7 AM at Cromwell Bridge P&R or 8 AM at Swan Harbor. Leaders: Peter Lev, plev@comcast.net or 410-823-2962 and Dave Larkin, larkin3001@comcast.net.

■ Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Easy half-day walk through varied habitats for feeder birds and other songbirds, raptors, and waterfowl. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Creek. Boots advisable, telescopes useful. 9 AM. Leaders: Brent and Mary Byers, 410-686-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

■ Caroline. Lynch Preserve, Two Johns. For more information about the preserve, go to: www.eslc.org/2012/07/lynch-preserve-now-open-to-public/. 8 AM. Park/meet at the end of Robins Creek Road. Leaders: Debby Bennett, dabennett1996@gmail.com & Danny Poet, birder231@hotmail.com.

■ Carroll. Town Hill Hawk Watch in Allegany County. We will settle in to look for Golden Eagles among other migrants. Up to all day. Meet at 8 AM at the P&R on Rte 32 just south of Rte 26 in Eldersburg.

Bring a lunch and a cushion. For more info, contact Bob Ringler, 410-303-2792.

Howard. Centennial Park. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Facilities available. 8 AM. 2-3 hours. West end parking lot. Leader Mike Kerwin, m63kerwin@verizon.net or 410-461-2408.

Talbot. Eastern Neck NWR. Large flocks of Canada Geese, Tundra Swans and numerous species of waterfowl are sure to be present. Early November is also a prime time to find wandering and vagrant western species. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM. Leader: Les Coble, 410-820-6165.

Monday, November 9

MEETING. **Talbot.** 7 PM at Bayleigh Chase Auditorium (aka William Hill Manor Auditorium), 501 Dutchman's Lane, Easton. Speaker and subject TBA.

Tuesday, November 10

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Board meeting. While only authorized Board members have a vote, any Club member is welcome to attend and participate in discussions. Call any club officer or board member for details. 7 PM. Greenhouse Classroom, Cylburn Arboretum, Baltimore.

MEETING. **Kent.** "Avian 'Candy' in the Pacific Northwest" – *Wayne Bell & Les Coble*. 7:30 PM, Wesley Hall at Heron Point, off East Campus Ave, Chestertown. If you have questions, please contact Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** Program and speaker TBD. 7 PM at College Park Aviation Museum.

Wednesday, November 11

Montgomery. LBJs at Blue Mash Nature Trail. Half day. Blue Mash is a good place to work on the basics of sparrow ID. In addition to the common species, like Song, Field and Chipping, we'll keep an eye out for less-likely White-crowned and Swamp. This trip is primarily for beginners but all are welcome. Limit 8. For reservations, time, and

directions, contact one of the co-leaders: Lydia Schindler, lydiaschindler@verizon.net or Linda Friedland, linnet1@verizon.net.

Washington. Enjoy hawk watching at Washington Monument SP from 9:30-noon. Trip is co-sponsored with the Potomac Valley Audubon Society. Meet in the upper parking lot at 9:30 AM. Registration is strongly encouraged. Leader: Sandy Sagalkin, monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

Thursday, November 12

MEETING. **Howard.** "Birding and Beyond...Howard County Diversity", by *Bonnie Ott*. Over her many years of leading field trips for our chapter (and walking her dog), Bonnie's camera has captured delightful local flora and fauna. Hospitality 7 PM; meeting/program 7:30 PM at Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Robin Todd, 410-491-5333.

Saturday, November 14

ANNUAL BANQUET. **Allegany/Garrett.** *Kevin Dodge* will speak on Learning Bird Songs (birding by ear.) The cost of the dinner is \$25.00. Please mail your check to: Carol McDaniel, 437 Serenity Dr., Grantsville, MD 21536. Short business meeting, followed by dinner and Kevin's presentation. Gathering starts at 5:30, dinner is at 6 PM at Penn Alps, Grantsville.

Baltimore. Youth Birding at Patterson Park. This urban park has a surprisingly diverse variety of birds that can be found during the year, and we can expect winter residents (and possibly unusual visitors) in both the brushy areas and on the lake. 8 AM. Leader: John Robinson, 443-810-9059 (c), 410-483-6620 (h), or jcrobin@jhmi.edu.

Baltimore. Papermill Flats and Ashland NCR Trail. Trip to two locations for marsh birds, wintering waterfowl and late fall songbirds. Bring spotting telescope if you have one. 8:30 AM. Meet at NCR Trail parking lot, north side of Ashland/Paper Mill Road. Leaders: Debbie Terry, 410 252-8771 or dterry12@verizon.net, and Kevin Graff, keyweststyle2001@gmail.com.

Frederick. Terrapin Park and Kent Island. Full day trip. We'll look for early winter waterfowl and other birds. Leader: Lois Kauffman, 301-845-6690.

Harford. Wildcard Waterfowl Tour. A chance to search a variety of spots to see the many species of waterfowl that use our waterways. Contact the leader Dave Webb, 410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net, or Matt Addicks, jsaddicks@comcast.net for details.

Sunday, November 15

Anne Arundel. Patuxent North Tract. Half-day. Chris Barry will lead a tour of the various habitats in the Patuxent North Tract refuge area. This is a quiet refuge, with limited road traffic, so we can walk and drive to different areas. There are open fields, ponds, hardwood and pine forests to explore. 8 AM. Meet at Parole P&R. Leader: Chris Barry, 410-271-4540 or gbarry.home@gmail.com.

Howard. Centennial Park. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Facilities available. 8 AM. 2-3 hours. West end parking lot. Leaders Richard and Renee Peters, Richard@rrrrpeters.org.

Kent. Kent County Landings. We will explore several of Kent County's landings and other spots for a variety of geese, ducks and some non-waterfowl as well. Half day, dress warmly & bring snacks. 8 AM. Meet at the Dollar General parking lot off Philosopher's Terrace in Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, e-mail: borealdee@gmail.com.

Montgomery. Lois Y. Green Park: Remembering Lou. The third annual walk in honor of former MBC president and all round naturalist Lou DeMouy who passed away in November, 2012. Meet at 7:30 AM. Reservations required. For more information and reservations contact Ed Patten, 301-948-5648.

Talbot. Bombay Hook NWR. All-day trip. Always a great trip in search of raptors, waterfowl, waders, passerines, lingering shorebirds and large flocks of arriving waterfowl. Bring lunch, drinks. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM. Leader: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742.

Wednesday, November 18

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Hummingbirds of the Mid-Atlantic", with *Bruce Peterjohn*, Chief of the US Bird Banding Laboratory. Bruce will bring us up-to-date on the status of hummingbirds across the mid-Atlantic region with an emphasis on the wintering species. Prepare to be surprised, because one never knows what species of hummingbird may show up at your house one day! 7 - 9 PM. Quiet Waters Park, Blue Heron Center, Annapolis.

MEETING. **Montgomery.** *Frank Hawkins* – "Birds of Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands." 7:30 PM. Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac.

Thursday, November 19

MEETING. **Caroline.** *Tim Schreckengost* will present "Bird Migration Study Results." 7:30 PM, Caroline County Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Patuxent. Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon. Luther Goldman Trail and along Indian Creek. 3 PM. Meet at parking lot at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich, mozurk@bellatlantic.net, for more info.

Saturday, November 21

Allegany/Garrett. Shawnee State Park, Bedford Co., PA. 9 AM. Meet at Roses parking lot, near the bank, at 9 AM. Lunch will be at Jean Bonnet Tavern in Bedford, PA. Leader: Melissa Hensel, mjhensel@yahoo.com or 240-362-1086.

Baltimore. Saturday Morning Monitoring Walk at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. Telescopes useful. Cancelled in bad weather. 8 AM - noon. Park outside the main entrance gate, in lot on left, and meet at the gate. Leader: Wendy Alexander, 410-788-4080 or drbeanes@verizon.net.

Carroll. Swan Harbor Farm and Conowingo Dam. Up to all day. From the quiet wetlands at Swan Harbor Farm to the wild waters of the Susquehanna, this trip has a lot of potential. Meet at 7 AM at the P&R lot on Route 32, just south of Route 26 in Eldersburg. Leader: Bob Ringler, 410-303-2792.

■ Harford. Sweet Air section of Gunpowder Falls State Park. Explore a variety of trails that meander among pines, deciduous woods, open fields, and riparian habitats. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Dalton-Brevard Rd parking area west of Routes 165 & 152. Leader: Susan Hood, 410-937-7552 or susanhood@comcast.net.

■ Howard. Waterfowl Search. Plan to visit the Columbia lakes to search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons, and other waterfowl. Easy walking involved. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. 8 AM - 2 PM. Meet at Broken Land Parkway parking lot at Lake Elkhorn. Leader Kurt Schwarz, krschwal@verizon.net or 410-461-1643.

■ Kent. Assateague Island. A prime location for sea ducks, late shorebirds, and gannets at the beaches and marshes, and late migrant land birds in thickets and dune woodlands. All day, bring lunch. Meet at the Dollar General parking lot (off Philosopher's Terrace) in Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, e-mail: borealdee@gmail.com.

■ Patuxent. Walk at the Governor Bridge Natural Area jointly with PG Audubon. 7:30 AM. Meet at the parking lot off Governor Bridge Rd, a mile from Rte 301. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Sunday, November 22

■ Howard. Centennial Park. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Facilities available. 8 AM. 2-3 hours. West end parking lot. Leader: Darius Ecker, decker@jcc.org.

■ Montgomery. Occoquan Bay NWR. Half day. Explore the diverse habitats in this one-square mile refuge at the confluence of the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers in Woodbridge, VA. A variety of migratory ducks and boreal migrants should be present. Meet at the parking lot in the center of the refuge at 8 AM. Reservations are necessary. Limit: 20. For reservations and more information, call one of the Leaders: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764 or

dhmbowen@yahoo.com or Gerry Hawkins, 571-277-8406 or maineuse@comcast.net.

■ Talbot. Ferry Neck Region. Stay close to home and explore the woodlands and inlets in the area around Bellevue. Gulls, waterfowl and wintering sparrows should all be in abundance. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM, or meet group at the Bellevue Ferry at 7:30 AM. Leader TBA. Breakfast: Priscilla and Paul Thut, 410-745-6657.

Monday, November 23

MEETING. **Tri-county.** *Gabby Cammarata*, MOS Scholarship awardee, will talk about attending the Field Ornithology workshop at Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine. 7 PM. Asbury United Methodist Church, South Entrance, Salisbury.

Tuesday, November 24

MEETING. **Washington.** Program: film Owl Power. 7 PM at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center, Hagerstown. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 for details.

Friday, November 27

■ Anne Arundel/Patuxent. Blackwater NWR. Barbara Ricciardi will lead this Black Friday at Blackwater trip to one of the best locations to see Snow Geese in our area. If the weather is cold enough, there can be thousands of Canada and Snow Geese, along with a wide assortment of ducks and other shorebirds. It is guaranteed you will see Bald Eagles on this trip. Bring a lunch and warm clothing. 9 AM. Meet at Bay 50 lot off Rt 50, last exit before Bay Bridge. RSVP leader: Barbara Ricciardi, 202-230-8492 or barbararicciardi@gmail.com.

Saturday, November 28

■ Baltimore. Patterson Park. Come see what birding action abounds amid the varied habitats of this green oasis in the middle of Baltimore. 8 - 9:30 AM. For questions or to arrange to borrow binoculars for the walk, contact Patterson Park Audubon Center, 410 558-2473 or ppaudubon@gmail.com.

■ Cecil. Eagle Watch at Conowingo Dam. Eagles start moving in from more northerly areas in November and stay until January or February. It is normally possible to see as many as 60 individuals or more at one time; we have seen as many as 175! In

addition to eagles, there will likely be other birds of interest, particularly gulls and ducks. Bring scope if you have one. Optional: lawn chair, blanket, hot drinks, and snacks. Dress for possible extreme cold and windy conditions. Meet at Fisherman's Park below the Dam at 9 AM and stay as little or as long as you want. Leader: Pat Valdata, pvaldata@zoominternet.net.

■ Washington. Birding along the Final Attack Trail at Antietam Battlefield. Trip is co-sponsored with Potomac Valley Audubon Society. Meet 8 AM at the Burnside Bridge parking lot Contact Sandy Sagalkin, monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

Sunday, November 29

* **Harford.** Conowingo Dam Eagle Watch. Expect more than 100 Bald Eagles and possibly a Golden Eagle (along with some buzzards). There will also be waterfowl and early winter songbirds. Meet at 8 AM at Fisherman's Park below the dam. Leader: Dennis Kirkwood, 410-692-5905 or newarkfarms@gmail.com.

■ Talbot. Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center in Grasonville. We will search open water, ponds, scrub growth, woods and fallow fields for whatever goodies they may harbor. Always a good location for a nice mix of diving and puddle ducks. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM, or meet at entrance to CBEC at 7:30 AM. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651.

Wednesday, December 2

■ Baltimore. First Wednesday Walk at Fort McHenry. Continuing a series of morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Telescopes useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. 8 AM - noon. Park outside the main entrance gate, in lot on left, and meet at the gate. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. Carroll. "Trogons and Mot-mots, Birding in Mexico" by *Kurt Schwarz*. 7 PM at Carroll Nonprofit Center in Westminster. Contact Don Jewell, jewelldg@gmail.com.

MEETING. Cecil. Speaker TBD. 7 PM at Elkton High School, Room B120, 110 James St, Elkton.

Thursday, December 3

HOLIDAY DINNER AND MEETING. Frederick. Our speaker will be *Bruce Beehler*, who will take us on an exploration of New Guinea to see Birds of Paradise. Dinner will be at Homewood at 6 PM at a cost of \$18.50 per person. We will also hold our fantastic silent auction. Please make reservations with and send money to Treasurer Grace Borell before 11/20/2015.

■ Patuxent. Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon. Luther Goldman Trail and along Indian Creek. 3 PM. Meet at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich, mozurk@bellatlantic.net, for more info.

Saturday, December 5

■ Eastern Neck NWR. Guided Winterfowl Walk. See description for November 7.

■ Harford. Delaware Coast. This trip will visit several hotspots along the Delaware Bay for wintering specialties. Meet at the 155/I-95 Park and Ride at 6:30 AM. Leader Russ Kovach, 443-386-4787 or russell.kovach@gmail.com.

■ Howard. Blackwater NWR. All day trip. Plan to stop at the Choptank River Bridge for ducks and coffee. Bring lunch and drinks. Dress warmly, Entrance fee or Duck Stamp required. Email the leader to reserve a spot and get details. We will carpool. Facilities at some spots Leader: Kurt Schwarz, krschwa1@verizon.net or 410-461-1643.

■ Montgomery. Lilypons/New Design Rd. Half day. Wintering field birds, targeting Fox and Tree Sparrows, possibly Virginia Rail and American Bittern. Contact leader for reservation (required) and more info. Leader: Clive Harris, clivegharris@yahoo.com.

MOS. BOARD MEETING. Hosted by Anne Arundel chapter. 10 AM at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, 1361 Wrighton Rd, Lothian, MD.

■ Patuxent. Walk at the Fran Uhler Natural Area jointly with PG Audubon. 7:30 AM. Meet at the end of Lemon's Br Rd, off Rte 197 just north of Bowie

State College. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton, kiwisuits@msn.com, for more info.

Sunday, December 6

Baltimore. Winter birds near Prettyboy Reservoir. Possible Fox Sparrow, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Thrasher, Winter Wren, Red-headed Woodpecker. Meet 8:15 AM at Mt. Carmel P&R off I-83 north, exit 27, just west of I-83 on the north (right) side of Mt. Carmel Road. Leader: Kevin Graff, keywestwtyle2001@gmail.com.

Carroll. Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center. Up to all day. This is a great place for ducks, sparrows, and who knows what else! 8 AM. Meet at the P&R on Route 97 just south of Route 26 in Eldersburg. Leader: Bob Ringler, 410-303-2792.

Patuxent. Piscataway Park. 8 AM. Meet at the end of Wharf Rd, off Farmington Rd (which is off Indian Head Hwy). Leader: David Mozurkewich, mozurk@bellatlantic.net.

Talbot. Cambridge waterfront & Dorchester County. An opportunity to join with Harry Armistead as he leads the bird walk at Blackwater NWR. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM. Leader: Dave Bent, 410-822-2133.

Tuesday, December 8

MEETING. Baltimore. Board meeting. While only authorized Board members have a vote, any Club member is welcome to attend and participate in discussions. Call any club officer or board member for details. 7 PM. Greenhouse Classroom, Cylburn Arboretum, Baltimore.

MEETING. Kent. Program and Speaker TBD. 7:30 PM, Wesley Hall at Heron Point, off East Campus Ave, Chestertown. If you have questions, please contact Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

MEETING. Patuxent. Topic and speaker TBD. 7 PM at College Park Aviation Museum.

Wednesday, December 9

MEETING. Montgomery. *Clive Harris*, Bird Quiz – test your knowledge against a selection of photos of birds that occur in the region. 7:30 PM. Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac.

Thursday, December 10

MEETING. Howard. "From Alice to Uluru to Kakadu: Birding the Northern Territory of Australia." by *Dave Harvey*. This remote area is a less traveled part of the country. Hospitality 7:00 PM; meeting/program 7:30 PM at Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Robin Todd, 410-491-5333.

Saturday, December 12

Baltimore. Youth Birding at Fort McHenry. 8 AM. We will walk around the area outside the fort, looking over the water for ducks, grebes and gulls, plus a selection of land birds in the grassy areas. This is an often interesting area for waterbirds, and as an option, those who desire can pay the entrance fee and tour the fort after the walk is over. Leader: John Robinson, 443-810-9059 (c), 410-483-6620 (h), or jcrobin@jhmi.edu.

Frederick. Conowingo Dam. Bald eagles and wintering waterfowl. Leader: Kathy Brown, 301-865-1369.

Harford. Waterfowl and Wildcard. Canvass the southern portion of the county for waterfowl and whatever else is happening in the area. Hopefully, there will be a rarity that is not too far and worth going for. We will start from Swan Harbor Farm Park and go from there. Meet at the Route 152 and I-95 P&R at 7:30 AM or at Swan Harbor at 8:00 AM. Leader: Mark Johnson, 410-692-5978.

Sunday, December 13

Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Easy half-day walk through varied habitats for feeder birds and other songbirds, raptors, and waterfowl. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Creek. Boots advisable, telescopes useful. 9 AM. Leaders: Brent and Mary Byers, 410-686-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

Carroll. Piney Run Park. Half day trip. Moderate walking around the lake scoping early waterfowl.

Continue through mixed forest and field edge in search of late migrants and winter resident species. 8 AM. Meet at the parking lot outside the gate to Piney Run Park on Martz Road off of White Rock Road. Leaders: Dave and Maureen Harvey, 410-795-3117.

■ Talbot. Eastern Talbot Fields & Landings. Half day trip. There are birds in those apparently bare winter fields and lots to see at the landings along the Choptank and Tuckahoe Rivers. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM. Leader: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Elkton.** Full day census of all birds in a circle of 7.5-mile radius centered on Black Hill on Elk Neck. Compiler TBA.

Monday, December 14

MEETING. **Talbot.** Spring Planning Meeting and covered dish supper. 6 PM. Host: Cathy Cooper, 410-822-3451.

Wednesday, December 16

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** Of Rice and Rails. Speaker *Greg Kearns*, Naturalist, Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission. Since Greg Kearns began his ground-breaking research on the Sora in 1987 at Jug Bay Wetlands, he has banded more than 4,000 of these secretive marsh-dwelling rails. He and USGS biologist Mike Haramis linked the alarming decline of the rails to the increase in Canada geese, which were rapidly clearing the Patuxent River marshes of wild rice. Greg coordinated a goose management plan, and today the wild rice in the management area has recovered close to the level of 20 years ago. Will Sora numbers increase as well? How have other waterfowl been affected? "It's a very delicate balance," Greg says. "There's nothing in these wetlands more productive and nutritious than strands of wild rice for seed-eating migrant birds." Greg will share his slides and stories on nature's delicate balancing act. 7 - 9 PM. Quiet Waters Park, Blue Heron Center, 600 Quiet Waters Park Rd, Annapolis.

Thursday, December 17

■ Patuxent. Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon. Luther Goldman Trail and along Indian Creek. 3 PM. Meet at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David

Mozurkewich, mozurk@bellAtlantic.net, for more info.

Saturday, December 19

■ Baltimore. Saturday Morning Monitoring Walk at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. Telescopes useful. Cancelled in bad weather. 8 AM - noon. Park outside the main entrance gate, in lot on left, and meet at the gate. Leader: David Sandler, 410-370-0747.

■ Patuxent. Walk at the Governor Bridge Natural Area jointly with PG Audubon. 7:30 AM. Meet at the parking lot off Governor Bridge Rd, a mile from Rte 301. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Allegany/Garrett.** Compiler: J B Churchill 301-697-2334 or jchurchi@atlanticbb.net.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Denton.** Coordinator: Steve Westre, 410-479-0338 or swestre26@comcast.net.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Charles Town, WV.** Includes a portion of Washington Co, MD. Compiler: Bob Dean, 304-671-4995 or dean8189@gmail.com.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Oakland.** Compiler: Connie Skipper, connieskipper@hohnet.net.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Triadelphia Reservoir.** Covers parts of Howard and Montgomery Counties and a sliver of PG. Compiler: David Holmes, musclbndr@gmail.com or 410-730-7083.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Wachapreague, VA.** Compiler: Marilyn Ailes, imailes@verizon.net or 757-824-0608.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Washington, DC.** ANS sponsored. Contact Carol Hayes, carol.hayes@ANShome.org or 301-652-9188 x10.

* CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Washington Co, MD.** Includes small portion of WV. Always looking for volunteers from other bird clubs. Compiler: Mark Abdy, mjabdy@yahoo.com or 301-432-7696

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **York, PA.** Alternate (bad weather) date Sunday, December 26. Compiler: Bernie Frick, bernardfrick@alum.lehigh.edu or 717-843-6675

Sunday, December 20

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Frederick.** Birders of all ages and levels of experience needed! Compiler: Mike Welch, 301-685-3561.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Jug Bay.** Compiler: Sam Droege, sdroege@usgs.gov or 301-497-5840 w, 301-390-7759 h.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Lower Kent.** Covers area from south of Chestertown & Tolchester to Eastern Neck Island. Full day of counting, followed by count down dinner. Compiler: Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Manassas-Bull Run, VA.** Interested volunteers may contact Bob Shipman, ships333@yahoo.com.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Nassawadox, VA.** Compiler: Harry Armistead, harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Port Tobacco.** Compiler: Gwen Brewer, 3wigeons@verizon.net or 410-741-9129.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Salisbury.** Join this traditional holiday birding event by calling compiler Mike Walsh, 410-422-0428.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Seneca MD and VA.** We always welcome new folks. To participate contact compiler Jim Nelson, kingfishers2@verizon.net (preferred) or 301-530-6574.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Southern Lancaster, PA.** Compiler: Bob Schutsky, 717-548-3303 or info@birdtreks.com.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Talbot.** Compiler: Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002 or wbell2@washcoll.edu. Potluck Dinner: 5:30 PM. Christ Episcopal Church parish hall, St. Michaels. Compilation begins after dinner. Dinner coordinator: Marge Steffens, 410-822-1966.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **YMOS.** Compiler George Radcliffe, radclifg@gmail.com.

Saturday, December 26

■ **Baltimore.** Patterson Park. Come see what birding action abounds amid the varied habitats of this green oasis in the middle of Baltimore. 8 - 9:30 AM. For questions or to arrange to borrow binoculars for the walk, contact Patterson Park Audubon Center, 410-558-2473 or ppaudubon@gmail.com.

■ **Washington.** Birding along the Final Attack Trail at Antietam Battlefield. Trip is co-sponsored with Potomac Valley Audubon Society. Meet 8 AM at the Burnside Bridge parking lot. Contact Sandy Sagalkin, monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **CBC4KIDS. Lancaster, PA.** Co-sponsored by Lancaster County Bird Club. 9 AM - 1 PM. Lancaster County Park Environmental Center, 1 Nature's Way, Lancaster, PA. Contact naturalist Lisa Sanchez at 717-295-2055.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Rock Run/Harford.** Compiler Rick Cheicante 410-803-2712 or rickcheicante@cs.com.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Southern Dorchester.** Compiler: Bruce Peterjohn, 301-497-1629 or bpeterjohn@usgs.gov.

Sunday, December 27

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Chesterville.** Covers most of eastern Kent Co & some of northern Queen Anne's. Compiler Maren Gimpel, 912-660-1541.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Crisfield.** Compiler: Paul Bystrak. 410-572-9950 or shrike@comcast.net.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Lititz, PA.** Compiler: Bruce Carl, carls94@ptd.net.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Patuxent River.** Compiler: Andrew Brown, brownaj@co.cal.md.us

Tuesday, December 29

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Central Loudoun.** Includes approximately 5 miles of the C&O Canal in MD

around White's Ferry. Sign up at www.loudounwildlife.org or contact compiler, Joe Coleman, 540-554-2542 or joecoleman@rstarmail.com.

Wednesday, December 30

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Cape Charles, VA.** Compiler: Harry Armistead, harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

Friday, January 1

■ **Baltimore.** Loch Raven Reservoir. Start the New Year birding. Varied habitats including woods, fields and the reservoir. Possibly also birding other sites for a "Big Day" in Baltimore City & County. 8:30 AM. Leader: Kevin Graff, keyweststyle2001@gmail.com or 410-557-2456.

■ **Harford.** Perryman Area. Celebrate the New Year/recover from New Year's Eve by birding the always productive Perryman Area. Meet at the Rt. 40 Aberdeen Walmart parking lot at 8:30 AM. Leader Phil Powers, 410-679-4116 or birdsinmd@verizon.net.

■ **Howard.** Howard Conservancy - Mount Pleasant Farm. Start your year list. Easy walking on paved paths and woodland trails. Plan to carpool to different locations to find as many species as possible. The one day of the year where every bird is new! Facilities available. 8 AM. Leader: Bonnie Ott, bonnieott@verizon.net or 443-285-3302.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Bowie.** Compiler: David Mozurkewich, mozurk@bellatlantic.net or 301-509-2212.

Saturday, January 2

■ **Eastern Neck NWR.** Guided Winterfowl Walk. See description for November 7.

AUDREY CARROLL MID-WINTER COUNT. **Frederick.** Meet at the sanctuary at 6:30 AM, and be prepared to visit all parts of the sanctuary's 129 acres. You may want your waterproof boots. Compiler: David Smith, 410-549-7082.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Calmes Neck, VA.** The cut off date to join this count is 12/21/15 as it is difficult to coordinate and place people at the last minute. This

circle covers parts of Clarke and Loudoun counties in VA. Compiler: Margaret Wester, margaretwester@hotmail.com or 540-837-2799.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. Ft. Belvoir, VA and MD.

Compilers: main/VA: Kurt Gaskill, kurtcapt87@verizon.net; MD: Lynne Wheeler, comstockel@aol.com.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Inwood, WV.** Compiler: Bob Dean, 304-671-4995 or dean8189@gmail.com.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Middle River.** Tally at McFaul's on Cromwell Bridge Road at 5 PM. Compiler Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com, or Kevin Graff, keyweststyle2001@gmail.com.

Sunday, January 3

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Sugarloaf Mountain, MD.** Compiler: Janet Millenson, janet@twocrows.com or 301-983-9337.

• CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Lancaster, PA.** Compiler: Barbara Hunsberger, phunsberger@comcast.net.

Wednesday, January 6

■ **Baltimore.** First Wednesday Walk at Fort McHenry. Continuing a series of morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Telescopes useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. 8 AM - noon. Park outside the main entrance gate, in lot on left, and meet at the gate. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Saturday, January 9

■ **Baltimore.** Special Youth Birding trip in Harford County. First stop, Conowingo Dam, where we will see lots of Bald Eagles, ducks, gulls, and numerous other birds enjoying the fish that get swept through the generating system. Second stop, Swan Harbor Farm in Havre de Grace where we can expect a variety of wintering land and water birds. Dress for the weather - it may be quite cold and windy, so warm coats, gloves and hats are recommended. Pre-registration is mandatory. 9 AM. Meet at the Wawa on Rte. 1 at the intersection of Rte 136 (Whiteford Rd.) Carpooling should be arranged ahead of time. Leader: John

Robinson, 443-810-9059 (c), 410-483-6620 (h), or jcrobin@jhmi.edu.

■ **Baltimore.** New Design Road in Frederick County. Bring 'scopes - we will be viewing winter field birds south of Frederick. For Horned Larks and possible Lapland Longspurs, slight chance of Snow Buntings. Optional visit to nearby Lily Pons aquatic farm for winter sparrows and surprises. 9 AM. Meet at I-70 P&R lot inside Beltway. Leaders: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com, and Kevin Graff, keyweststyle2001@gmail.com.

MEETING. **Carroll.** Annual Holiday Party at the Yinglings, 70 Ridge Road in Westminster. 7:30 PM. Talk birds, eat, drink, and have fun with fellow birders. Sue and Splinter Yingling, hostess/host. Please coordinate with the Yinglings to bring a dish, syngling@mac.com or 410-857-0902.

Sunday, January 10

■ **Tri-county.** Ocean City, MD to Cape Henlopen, DE for winter coastal birds. Bring lunch and drinks. Dress warmly. 7:30 AM. Meet at the Ward Museum parking lot off S Shumaker Dr at Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury. Leader: TBD.

Saturday, January 16

■ YOUTH CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Harford.** 2nd Annual. Each participant, accompanied by an adult, will be part of a small birding team headed by an experienced birder. Each team will record the number of bird species spotted along a pre-determined route. All teams will tally their results, and add the data to eBird inside the center. Age groups 4-7 and 8-16. 8 AM. Swan Harbor Farm, Havre de Grace. For additional information contact Harfordyouthbirding@yahoo.com.

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U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
at Hagerstown, MD
Permit No. 184

The Maryland Yellowthroat
Newsletter of the Maryland
Ornithological Society, Inc.

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles, photos, or ideas that would be of interest to other birders.

Copy may be e-mailed to Richard Donham by Nov 25, 2015 for the Jan/Feb 2016 issue.

Illustrations pp. 1,2 ©M. Suzanne Probst

Websites for the most up to date calendar information:

Allegany/Garrett: westernmdbirding.com/

Anne Arundel: aabirdclub.org/

Baltimore: baltimorebirdclub.org/

Caroline: carolinebirdclubmos.blogspot.com/

Carroll: mdbirds.org/about/chapters/carroll.html

Cecil: cecilbirds.org/

Frederick: frederickbirdclub.org/

Harford: harfordbirdclub.org/

Howard: howardbirds.org/

Kent: kentcounty.com/recreation/birding/birding-club

Montgomery: montgomerybirdclub.org/

Patuxent/PG: pgaudubon.org/

Talbot: mdbirds.org/about/chapters/talbot.html

Tri-County (Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset): tricountybirdclub.weebly.com/

Washington: washingtoncountybirdclub.webs.com/

YMOS: ymos.org/